



TEXAS

Comprehensive Selective Traffic Enforcement Program

► AT-A-GLANCE

► **Project Characteristics**
Enforcement

► **Program Areas**
Police Traffic Services

► **Targeted Populations**
Pasadena Motorists

► **Type of Jurisdiction**
City

► **Jurisdiction Size**
140,000

► **Funding**
402 Funds: \$185,959
Local Funds: \$61,986

► **Contact**
Lt. M.C. Reiss
Pasadena Police Dept.
1114 Jeff Ginn
Pasadena, TX 77506
(713) 477-1221
mcreiss@ci.pasadena.tx.us

Problem Identification

The city of Pasadena is growing both residentially and commercially. With twelve major roadways transecting the city, it is a major commuter route for suburban dwellers going to jobs in Houston and surrounding cities. Seventy-six percent of motor vehicle crash injuries occurred on these twelve roads in Pasadena.

In 1999, Pasadena had a high number of speed-related crashes and persons injured in crashes. Pasadena experienced a steady increase in the total number of accidents each year with a peak of 4,509 in 2002. Pasadena also experienced a steady increase in the number and severity of traffic crashes caused by excessive speed, running stop signs, red lights, and Driving While Intoxicated (DWI). In 2001, thirty-three percent of traffic crashes were caused by these three factors. There were 188 DWI violations, 517 red light and stop sign violations, and 756 speed-related crashes.

The increase in crashes was expected as the city's population and transit population grew. The police department required additional assets to make a major effort to increase compliance with the traffic laws, but city budget restrictions precluded hiring more officers or increasing overtime for department officers.

Goals and Objectives

The *Comprehensive Selective Traffic Enforcement Program's (STEP)* goal is to reduce the number of crashes caused by excessive speed, disregard of traffic control devices, and alcohol.

The project's objectives are to:

- Increase compliance with traffic laws in Pasadena and thereby reduce injury crashes by five percent;
- Decrease intersection crashes by five percent and alcohol-related crashes by ten percent; and
- Increase safety belt use by two percent and speed citations by 26 percent.

Strategies and Activities

The *Comprehensive Selective Traffic Enforcement Program* implemented the following strategies and related activities to achieve its goals and objectives:

- Used STEP grant funds (funds used for enforcement efforts directed towards issuing citations for speed, intersection and safety belt



NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

TRAFFIC SAFETY DIGEST

SPRING 2004

violations, and DWI arrests) to pay officers overtime

- Issued citations for speed, intersection and safety belt violations, and DWI arrests
- Put more officers on the street during peak crash periods
- Advertised enforcement effort through press releases to newspapers, radio, and television news

Results

Since the *Comprehensive Selective Traffic Enforcement Program* began in 2000, the number of injury crashes and injured persons has dropped from a peak of 1,408 injury crashes in 2001 to 1,289 in 2003. The number of persons injured in crashes dropped from 2,315 in 2001 to 2,050 in 2003. The Comprehensive STEP achieved the following results during 2003:

- Reduced speed crashes by 5.9 percent
- Reduced intersection-related crashes by 39.5 percent
- Reduced alcohol-related crashes by 11.2 percent
- Increased speed citations by 178.5 percent
- Averaged 3.237 citations per hour (which does not include 134 DWI arrests and 241 other arrests during STEP enforcement actions)

This data proves that a comprehensive selective traffic enforcement program is beneficial to the welfare of a city's citizens.